Is This Your Last Roosie?

Each month for ten months a year, The Roosie magically appears on your doorstep and at various cafes, bars, and shops around the neighborhood. Many people tell us that they enjoy it, that it adds to their understanding of local issues, and that it provides a sense of belonging. Well, that may not be able to continue unless we get some new help to produce and deliver it. In order for The Roosie to continue, we must find a new editor and a Chief Blockhead.

Here is the story: each month at the RNA Board meeting, we plan content and decide who should write articles for The Roosie. Non-board members also submit unsolicited articles that we consider for timing with the theme for the month. Articles are then sent to the editor no later than the last Sunday of the month. The editor lays out the article content, along with photographs, local paid advertisements, and the occasional graphic design to fit into the newsletter template. The editor then takes the electronic files to our printer, The UPS Store on 65th. A few days later, the editor picks up the 2,200 copies and delivers them to our Chief Blockhead. The Chief Blockhead counts and distributes them to the various blockheads, and the individual blockheads deliver them to your door—ideally around the 15th of the month, before the RNA monthly meeting. We deliver Roosies to every building between I-5 and 20th NE and between Ravenna Boulevard and NE 80th. The whole process starts all over again at each RNA Board meeting.

Greg Carlson has done sterling work as editor of The Roosie for over four years and has decided to move on to other projects. He gave the Board lots of notice and helped us find his replacement. The new editor was to have started with the September edition, but in August decided that he was unable to take on the position after all. Greg stepped in and agreed to do the September and October editions, and then retire. We need a local neighbor with editing skills, knowledge of Adobe InDesign and Adobe PhotoShop (training available), and a willingness to come to about 30 minutes of a monthly Board meeting to plan each edition, collect articles, and produce The Roosie.

Laura Souyoultzis, who has reliably been our Chief Blockhead for a number of years, needs to stop so she can pursue other projects. This position needs someone who is willing to deliver piles of Roosies to about 25 different Blockheads and shops in the neighborhood. It needs to happen fairly promptly after the editor has delivered The Roosie to them (the newsletters are generally ready for distribution on the first weekend of the month).

The Roosie is one important way that we have been able to help keep Roosevelt a strong community as we move through these years of development of the light rail station and the redevelopment of the Sisley properties. If you think you can help us fill these two positions, please email me (rnapeter@gmail.com).

-Peter James
RNA President

Next RNA Meeting
Tuesday, October 25
7:30-9:30 p.m.
Roosevelt High School, meeting room to be determined.

The theme of the meeting is Parks and Gardens and will include presentations on:

- The experience of Maple Leaf and their new Reservoir Park.

- A park by Roosevelt High School.

- Improving Cowen Park.

- Sustainable fall gardening.

- Updates from land use, business, and sustainability committees, and discussions on the future of The Roosie.
Rezone Meeting Draws Large Crowd

On September 19, some 500 neighbors and stakeholders came together for a special session of the City Council’s Committee on the Built Environment (COBE) to discuss the potential upzoning of the Roosevelt central business core. The COBE meeting, chaired by Councilmember Sally Clark, was not only attended by committee members, but was attended by the entire Seattle City Council. This was a fantastic show of support by the Council for neighborhood planning, and the RNA is very grateful for the Council’s attendance at this important discussion.

The key issue discussed was how to rezone Roosevelt for future growth. Two proposals were presented to the audience: the City’s most recent rezone proposal for up to 80 feet of height on several blocks along 12th Ave NE and the Sustainable Livable Roosevelt (SLR) plan authored by the community that centralizes building height around the intersection of Roosevelt and 65th. Both plans suggest upzones in front of the high school, the SLR plan suggesting 40 feet and the City plan suggesting 65 feet of height. The details and web links to both plans are available at the RNA website: http://rooseveltsalette.org. We hope you can take time to review the options.

In the end several great points were discussed, including the role a neighborhood should have in deciding its own fate. With at least six outside neighborhood representatives in attendance, including University Heights, Maple Leaf, and Ravenna, it is clear the entire City is watching this discussion. Please get engaged. Write a letter or attend a hearing (the next COBE meeting is Wednesday, October 12 at City Hall). Let the City Council know how you feel. They are most definitely listening.

-John Adams

Business Owners Discuss Solutions to Break-Ins and Vandalism

Over the last several months, there has been a series of break-ins and robberies in the Roosevelt business district. While nobody has been injured, these kinds of events are troubling, a financial drain, and disruptive to the business community. Front doors of businesses have been shattered, a safe stolen, and in one instance over $15,000 in merchandise stolen. Car thefts and vandalism have also occurred. A surveillance camera caught one break-in, but no one has been apprehended from that yet.

Discussions have begun amongst the business owners in Roosevelt regarding organizing to take action to prevent crime in the neighborhood. Over a dozen shopkeepers have agreed to fund hiring off-duty Seattle police officers to protect the neighborhood between 1 a.m. and dawn on selected nights. As one business owner put it, “With police in the neighborhood on patrol, the response time to a crime would be a few short minutes!”

A meeting was recently held with Seattle police, and it seems that a “Constable on Patrol” program is feasible. Finances and schedules are being explored. Plans are being considered for design and printing of window signs to be displayed prominently in the Roosevelt businesses announcing the new security initiative.

The Roosevelt business community welcomes support from any and all citizens, and urges additional business owners to join and support this “Constable on Patrol” initiative. Contact RNA@rooseveltsalette.org for more information, to assist in funding the program, or to make suggestions.

-Martin Roth
Let's face it: when light rail stops in our neighborhood, Roosevelt will be an attractive place to call home by more people. I'm not talking about zoning, but if you've reviewed the current zoning, you know that there is room to grow even without rezoning. Eventually properties owners will realize that if more people want to live here, their underdeveloped properties could become profitable if they build multifamily dwellings (a.k.a. apartment buildings). There’s no doubt about it; we’re going to get taller buildings and more people, with or without rezoning.

When those taller buildings are built, what’s going to fight off the claustrophobia? Open spaces! When those apartment dwellers start living here, where will they go to enjoy the outdoors during that one week of summer that we get every year? Open spaces! So the question is: where will we put those open public spaces? This article is about open spaces.

In 2001 and again in 2006, Seattle Parks and Recreation reported on “Gaps in Seattle’s Open Space Network” (http://www.seattle.gov/parks/publications/GapReport.htm). These reports used Geographic Information System mapping to identify where Seattle was not meeting its usable open space goals as outlined in the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The Gap analysis summarizes those goals as follows: “Usable Open Space can be summarized as dedicated open space that is relatively level, green, open, and easily accessible. According to the City’s Comprehensive Plan, the minimum size of Usable Open Space ranges from 10,000 square feet for Urban Village Open Space to one-half of an acre in single family areas. The Comprehensive Plan also sets forth goals for the geographic distribution of Usable Open Space and for the provision of Usable Open Space based on the number of households and jobs in urban villages.”

The Comprehensive Plan details several measurements that refer to the amount of open space per capita, measured in square feet or acreage, and the proximity to residents in the area, measured in miles. Open space includes a variety of areas, from parks and public golf courses to greenbelts and conservation areas. But if you think the Roosevelt High School playing field qualifies as a public open space, you’d be mistaken. For the purposes of the gap analysis when school is in session, RHS is reserved for faculty and students.

The gap analysis report essentially determined that while there is sufficient open space in Roosevelt, the open space we have is not equitably distributed throughout the neighborhood. In particular, there is an area—about the shape of an equilateral triangle with its tip pointing east overlapping the high school and its base along I-5—which is not within the quarter mile maximum distance prescribed for a densely-populated area.

By now you’re asking “why should I care?” Here are some thoughts. The City has promised that a certain amount of your taxes will go to parks so you can enjoy the outdoors and the City should either deliver or stop taxing you. When all those taller buildings start going up, how will you get a sense of not being fenced in? With masses of people in the neighborhood, wouldn’t it be nice if all of your neighbors, home owners and apartment dwellers alike felt a sense of belonging because there are open spaces to share? And last but not least, when people come to visit and support our neighborhood businesses (Shop), wouldn’t it be great if they enjoy the experience so much that they keep coming back?

If any of those thoughts lead you to believe that you do care, or if you just want to share your thoughts, please come to the RNA monthly meeting to get details, discuss options, and discover ways you can help.

-Randall Weers
The Roosie is supported in large part by advertising revenues. Consider placing the name of your business on the doorsteps of 1,500 local households each month. For advertising rates, policies, and specifications, please send an email to roosie@rooseveltsa.com.

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